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To: Gilles Bissonnette <gilles@aclu-nh.org>
Subject: Morning Report: N.H. schools told to certify compliance with Trump's anti-DEI orders
Reply-To: Globe New Hampshire <reply-fe5e10767c64007e7016-23395879_HTML-17089565-10897956-2001@email.bostonglobe.com>



By [Steven Porter](#) and [Amanda Gokee](#)
Globe New Hampshire Staff

April 9, 2025

*Good morning, Granite Staters! I'm Steven Porter, and I'm thoroughly disappointed by the **cold weather** but trying to focus on the sunshine. ☀ Did someone forward this to you? [Sign up here](#). Got a tip? [Tell us about it](#).*

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Today's topic: DEI

A federal judge in New Hampshire is slated to hear arguments Wednesday afternoon on an urgent request to block the government from moving forward with plans to defund schools that defy the Trump administration's directives on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Whether that hearing will go on as scheduled remains to be seen, as stakeholders react to shifts in the deadlines imposed by the US Department of Education and its state-level partners — a situation that illustrates the uncertainty around implementation of President Trump's anti-DEI orders, which critics contend are **vague and unconstitutional**.

Initially, the federal Education Department **told** state officials on Thursday to certify their compliance with the Trump administration's interpretation of federal law on this topic within 10 days. The New Hampshire Department of Education quickly fell in line, telling superintendents to submit their certifications to the state by this Thursday.

Citing that tight deadline, attorneys from the American Civil Liberties Union of New Hampshire and the National Education Association filed an **emergency motion** seeking a temporary restraining order.

"The pressure on education institutions is immediate and heavy," they **wrote**, adding that state and local education agencies "face an impossible choice: certify adherence to vague requirements and risk severe sanctions or fail to certify and risk loss of critical federal funding."

This week, as some Democrat-led cities and states elsewhere **pushed back**, the federal Education Department extended its deadline to April 24. Then the New Hampshire DOE notified school districts late Tuesday afternoon that they would now have another week, until April 17, to submit their certifications to the state.

In light of the looser deadlines, Assistant US Attorney Robert J. Rabuck argued in **a filing** late Tuesday that it would be "unnecessary and inappropriate" for the court to provide emergency relief at this

stage in the litigation.

A spokesperson for the New Hampshire DOE said about 100 school districts and charter schools have already **submitted their certifications**, as directed. Superintendents across the state, from Portsmouth to Keene to Berlin, signed documents certifying that their districts will avoid “illegal DEI practices.” Those documents say anyone who knowingly submits a claim for federal funds on behalf of an entity that maintains impermissible DEI practices faces civil liability under the False Claims Act.

But some school leaders are refraining from signing the certification just yet. Somersworth School District Superintendent John Shea said the anti-DEI orders are riddled with ill-defined concepts, so it’s not entirely clear what is allowed and what isn’t.

Somersworth schools don’t have any “DEI” programs or personnel, per se, but they do see diversity, equity, and inclusion as critical values, Shea said.

While there are notable differences, Shea said these anti-DEI directives from the Trump administration are “fruit on the same tree” as **New Hampshire’s “banned concepts” law**, as both policies risk undermining efforts to reckon honestly with a shared history that is complex and still unfolding.

— Steven

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From the Globe

'Banned concepts': A federal appellate court in Boston heard oral arguments Tuesday after the New Hampshire attorney general's office appealed a trial court judge's ruling that the state law, which prohibits teaching that people of one race or sex are inherently superior or oppressive, was unconstitutionally vague. ([Read more](#))

Hiker rescued: After falling off a trail, an injured Canadian hiker was rescued in windy conditions in the White Mountains. Several rescuers were injured in the effort, officials said. ([Read more](#))

Make America Go Away? American tourists, including Jill Graham of Windham, worry how Canadians will receive them this summer. "Do they realize not all of us agree with Trump?" Graham said. ([Read more](#))

Hunkering down: Tariffs and a slumping stock market are putting small New England businesses in a bind. One CEO said she's trying not to overreact. At the same time, there's a fine line between patience and paralysis. ([Read more](#))

Globe Magazine: Dozens of New England colleges could close within the next decade. Why? It's not President Trump. The reason dates back to the Great Recession, when people started having fewer babies. ([Read more](#))

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New Hampshire news to know

Granite State Landfill LLC, a subsidiary of Casella Waste Systems, is suing after the state denied a permit to build a landfill near Forest Lake in Dalton. ([New Hampshire Bulletin](#))

Laura Pantelakos, a former Democratic state representative who represented Concord for 44 years, died this week at 89 years old. She is remembered as a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother who was committed to community service. ([Portsmouth Herald](#))

Federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives were working helping US Immigration and Customs Enforcement when they detained a man inside a Nashua courtroom earlier this year. ([WMUR](#))

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The big picture



Rescuers carried an injured hiker uphill for nearly a mile in 40 to 60 mile per hour headwinds in a [rescue effort](#) Saturday night near Mount Clay. (New Hampshire Fish and Game)

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